

## NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

ADVERTISEMENTS of 16 Words under the Headings Situations Vacant, Wanted, For Sale, To Let, Lost and Found, Miscellaneous Wants, etc., 2/- per insertion. Death Notices, etc., 2/6; verses, 4/- per inch extra. Strictly Cash in Advance. No booking for casual advertisements.

## DEATHS

LOCKHART.—On July 21, 1917, at 80 Highgate, Roslyn, Honora Katherine, dearly beloved wife of O. M. Lockhart, and third daughter of the late Wm. Moore, Ravensbourne, and Mrs. T. Fitzgibbons, Hampden.—R.I.P.

Farewell, dear, but not for ever,  
There will be a glorious dawn;  
We but part to meet for ever  
On the resurrection morn.  
Thou thy darling form lies sleeping  
In the cold and silent tomb,  
Thou shalt have a glorious waking  
When the Blessed Lord doth come.

McCLINTOCK. On July 17, 1917, at his residence, Bendigo Hotel, Alexandra, Robert James, dearly loved husband of Anne McClintock: aged 48 years. R.I.P.

## IN MEMORIAM

KANE.—Of your charity pray for the repose of the soul of Margaret Kane, who departed this life on August 7, 1916, at Invercargill.  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on her soul.  
Inserted by her sorrowing family.

## WANTED

WANTED kind person to Adopt Healthy BABY GIRL (six weeks). Apply "Catholic Infant," N.Z. Tablet Office.

MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIII. TO THE N.Z. TABLET.  
*Pergant Directores et Scriptores New Zealand Tablet, Apostolica Benedictione confortati, Religionis et Justitiae causam promovere per ovis Veritatis et Pacis.*  
Die 4 Aprilis, 1909. LEO XIII., P.M.

TRANSLATION. Fortified by the Apostolic Blessing let the Directors and Writers of the New Zealand Tablet continue to promote the cause of Religion and Justice by the ways of Truth and Peace.  
April 4, 1909. LEO XIII., Pope.



THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 1917.

## SUPERSTITION



SOME weeks ago we called attention to the growth of superstitious practices during the war. In the large cities professional charlatans of various types, psychists, clairvoyantes, and common or garden fortune-tellers are reaping a golden harvest through the popular credulity. The craze is not confined to the ignorant and unsophisticated. Some years ago Mr. Stead, who was drowned with the Titanic, believed, on the authority of "letters from Julia," that he would be

kicked to death on the streets of Constantinople, and now Sir Oliver Lodge has lent the authority of his great name to Spiritism, telling us that he has had communications with the spirit of his son, Raymond, who was killed lately at the Front. It is worth while recalling to our readers the attitude of the Catholic Church in this connexion.

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Many people are convinced that all the phenomena have a natural explanation. We admit, as all who have studied the matter must admit, that ninety per cent. of the marvellous manifestations are the result of trickery. It is hardly too much to say that Spiritism, as far as it comes within the ken of the average man, is all trickery, and that the effects which astonish and terrify the credulous audiences are due to harmless white magic. So many wonders, seemingly inexplicable, have been explained away, and so many frauds exposed that it is natural enough to refuse to believe that there is not an explanation for all the phenomena without calling in spirits or devils. About six years ago we saw Mr. Maskelyne performing in St. George's Hall a "mystery" which drew down upon him the wrath of some grave clergymen. He used to stand on the middle of the stage with his left arm uplifted while the form of a girl was seen to appear slowly out of his side, and finally to walk about and talk. It was as wonderful as anything that Spiritists had achieved; but it was simplicity itself when Mr. Maskelyne explained how it was done, without the intervention of spirits, good, bad, or indifferent. Recently a gentleman who has devoted much time to the study of the phenomena told us that he attended a seance at which the medium was supposed to communicate with the spirit of Confucius. He addressed Confucius in Chinese. Confucius protested that during his astral perambulations he had forgotten his own language! At another seance the same gentleman had an opportunity of speaking with the spirit of Cardinal Newman. He told the eminent spirit that as he wished to converse about a subject which did not concern the audience he would speak in Latin. He began to recite the words so familiar to the Cardinal: "*Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*" The spirit in reply thundered forth, "Rash mortal! Seek not to penetrate into the secrets of the Omnipotent." And no doubt the audience was duly impressed by this nonsense.

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There are also many who while admitting that charlatanism and trickery are at the bottom of most of the phenomena maintain that there are some manifestations which no natural means can explain. Let us point out that it is poor logic to attribute to the demon all effects which we can not account for. Inexplicable phenomena are not necessarily preternatural: what we cannot account for physically is not therefore to be straightway put down to the devil. To introduce the devil as the cause of every mysterious and unintelligible happening is not only puerile, but it holds religion up to ridicule. After countless experiences, Professor Meric, an authority of weight, sums up his conclusions as follows: 1. That the phenomena are as yet not sufficiently investigated to enable us to pronounce definitely on them. 2. For some of them no natural explanation has been found satisfactory. 3. In many cases the causes require further examination. 4. That most of the phenomena which occur with certainty depend on some natural *conditio sine qua non*, which leads to the supposition that their cause is occult, but natural. The finding of the London "Society for Psychic Research" was that beneath much error and imposture there lay a real influence which was to be accounted for, and which they explained on the theory of Suggestion.

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To explain the phenomena regarded as authentic three hypotheses are proposed. 1. The telepathic hypo-

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